

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

May1, 2013

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow  
Chairwoman  
Senate Committee on Agriculture,  
Nutrition and Forestry  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Agriculture,  
Nutrition and Forestry  
328A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Lucas  
Chairman  
House Committee on Agriculture  
2311 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Agriculture  
2211 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Stabenow, Ranking Member Cochran, Chairman Lucas, and Ranking Member Peterson:

We write you to convey our strong support for advancing a Farm Bill this year. We believe the Farm Bill represents a tremendous opportunity to support one of Colorado's and America's most crucial economic engines, to provide relief to farmers and ranchers affected by historic drought conditions, and to make a meaningful contribution toward national debt and deficit reduction goals.

In 2012 the worst drought in decades left many producers in Colorado and nationwide with withered crops, scorched pasture, and significant financial losses. With a new growing season underway, farmers and ranchers are again battling against dust storms, hay shortages, and other weather-related challenges that threaten productivity. For our state's \$40 billion agriculture sector, 2013 will present both great challenges and opportunities.

There is, of course, nothing Congress can do to prevent the next drought from occurring. But lawmakers in Washington can provide a responsible five-year policy roadmap for agriculture through the Farm Bill. Reauthorizing this important legislation would inject certainty into the entire food supply chain—from processors, to transporters, to consumers—and provide farmers and ranchers with the tools they need to manage the dry conditions and to plan for the future.

We can build on successes from the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress when, as you know, the Senate passed a Farm Bill with broad bipartisan support. It included critical farm program accountability reforms, a smart consolidation of conservation programs, fully paid-for disaster assistance, and responsible nutrition support to aid our most vulnerable communities. The House Agriculture Committee passed a similar Farm Bill, which also provides a strong foundation for this year's efforts.

Under your strong leadership, the Farm Bills passed by the Senate and the House Agriculture Committee last year would have saved taxpayers over \$23 billion. While Congress has thus far fallen short of moving a five-year reauthorization of the 2008 Farm Bill forward, agriculture policy has in fact been a rare point of prudent reform, compromise, and spending reduction in an otherwise difficult lawmaking environment.

We stand ready to work with you and our colleagues in the Senate and House to craft a food and fiber policy that boosts rural economies in Colorado and across the country.

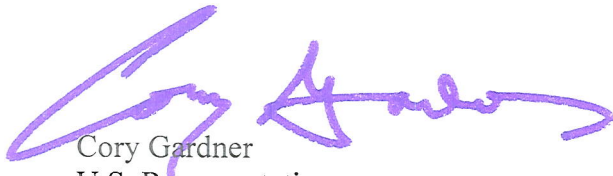
Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet  
U.S. Senator



Mark Udall  
U.S. Senator



Cory Gardner  
U.S. Representative



Ed Perlmutter  
U.S. Representative



Mike Coffman  
U.S. Representative



Scott Tipton  
U.S. Representative

CC: Honorable Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader  
Honorable John Boehner, Speaker of the House